



K.

Convention of Asses
or Spirit of Democracy.



K.

Convention of Asses
or Spirit of Democracy.

4643 n
2
THE

K. Dullaw (A)

RIGHTS OF ASSES,

A P O E M.

OPPRESSION CEASE IN EVERY NATION—
COME, FREEDOM, REIGN THROUGHOUT CREATION.

ENTERED IN STATIONERS HALL.

EDINBURGH;

Printed for ROBERTSON and BERRY, South Bridge.

Anno 1792.



RIGHTS of ASSES.

As lately at a Muirland fair,
Where cadgers, tinkers, thieves, repair,
With many others of like classes;
And most of them had with them Asses.

To see how best they might devise,
To carry off some lusty prize;
The masters went to bouse together,
And left their beasts among the heather;
Where, after picking scanty supper,
Each Ass sat down upon his crupper:
I quite forgot to count them o'er,
But think there might be near threescore.

A DARING Ass presum'd to mention,
That now they ought to hold Convention;
And first, he mov'd to chuse a Preses,
(For there's some order among Asses:)
This done, with more than Asses fire,
He rose, and audience did desire.—

He

He said, my friends, my fellow Asses,
 Regard we nought what round us passes ;
 How other folks their rights maintain,
 While we're oppress'd and ne'er complain.

The sacred writers have reported,
 How Patriarchs our service courted ;
 We then ate corn, or graz'd in meadows,
 But now our riders seldom feed us :
 When we for corn to Egypt went,
 When Jacob's sons were thither sent,
 They trudg'd beside us on their feet,
 And we ate as our masters ate.
 But horses now in every land,
 Stand in the stalls where we should stand ;
 Great folks now keep vast numbers by them,
 Altho' " forbid to multiply them :"
 To us, one hearty feed's a stranger,
 While they are full at hack and manger.
 The horse, of more majestic mein,
 With coach and harness in his train,
 They say, can learn his duty faster ;
 But, Where's the horse e'er taught his master ?

My friends, we have been long abus'd,
 And for the meanest drudg'ry us'd,
 While horses have been kept for pleasure,
 And take their airings at their leisure.
 Of old, my friends, it was not thus,
 For every great man rode his Ass ;

And

And tho' not fram'd to lead in battle,
 Yet we were deem'd must useful cattle.
 Now horses get what we deserve,
 And we are left to steal or starve ;
 Come then, my friends, my hearty bloods,
 Let's rise and kick them from their studs ;
 Our cause is just. A few campaigns
 Will surely ease us of our chains.
 He ceas'd :—Each Ass stretch'd out his crest,
 And bray'd applause, and speaker blest.

SAVE an old cautious, mod'rate Cuddie,
 Who said he had it from his goodie,
 To learn to brook some small restraint,
 For folks were happy, if content.
 I own, my friends, we're not's we have been,
 Asses have many better days seen ;
 But if we look around, we'll see
 That others are as bad as we.

THE former speaker talks of horses ;
 What creature under heaven worse is ?
 Do ye not see him plow the field ?
 And we eat what his labours yield :
 By him we have our hay and straw,
 Tho' whiles his litter we must gnaw,
 And, tho' our skins be not so sleek,
 Yet some get corn once in a week.
 'Tis true, he boasts of birth and blood,
 And sprung from this, or that Lord's stud ;

But

But see ye not how much he's pain'd,
 By spurs he's driven, by bits restrain'd :
 See, from his sides how springs the blood,
 And oft he faints upon the road :
 See what he's forc'd to draw from Leith,
 And suff'ring strokes much worse than death,
 Unless beyond his strength he draws,
 Nor lifts, from morn to night, his jaws.
 At other times, he must gainfay not,
 But face a cannon or a bay'net ;
 Compar'd with these, we live in peace,
 Our lives are lives of happiness.

YET more, my friends, if we but trace
 Our breth'ren of the human race ;
 I say, if we but view those great ones,
 Ev'n those who boast the birth of Britons :
 View them with care, and ye will see,
 That they are more oppress'd than we.
 See how their rulers do oppress them,
 And strain their wits how to assess them.
 Soon as they see the light of day,
 They for that light must taxes pay ;
 Nor yet can one a Christian be,
 Until the King has got his fee ;
 Nor can be buried when they're dead,
 Unless their rulers first are feed.

I'VE often heard the farmers say,
 (Besides what they to landlords pay)

From

From ev'ry boll there goes a firloot,
 To feed some drone, or great man's harlot.
 The horse he feeds, he cannot ride,
 'Till first a tax for him be paid ;
 With tax on beer, and tax on malt,
 With tax on spirits and on salt ;
 With tax on coaches, servants, rents,
 On all these taxes—*ten per cents*.
 And, (what is stranger still to say)
 Tax'd if he should those taxes pay ;
 Tax'd if he pay his honest debt,
 With stamps for this sum, stamps for that :
 Tax'd before he dare kill a hare,
 Either with dog, or gun, or snare ;
 Tax'd if o'er pot the news do chat,
 And licences for this and that :
 With tax on hats, on gloves, and shoes,
 Tax'd for the road on which he goes.
 For physic tax'd—and tax'd for law ;
 Tax'd if his wife lie in the straw.
 Thus, well and hearty, or relax'd,
 Alive, or dead, he must be tax'd.

THESE taxes, when they count them o'er,
 Amount to millions near a score ;
 And of these millions, not a few,
 Are paid to bribe a venal crew.

BESIDES these ills, the folks in towns,
 Are whiles rode down by rude dragoons.

See

See towns laid under martial law,
 Left boys shou'd burn a whisp of straw !
 And if they shou'd resent such deeds,
 They'll soon send bullets thro' their heads ;
 Or try for life a Brewer's Beast,
 For only joining in the jest ;
 And some are sent o'er seas, they tell us,
 Where they'll be eaten by their fellows.

THESE ills, and thousands more than these,
 Are saddl'd on the human race ;
 And tho' they're " wiser far than we,"
 Yet see how they to these agree,
 Nor ever raise such strange confusions,
 But please themselves with CONSTITUTIONS.

THE toils of war we can't endure,
 Its good's a risk, its ills are sure ;
 Then cease ye from their fav'rite horses,
 And be not doom'd to human curses ;
 Left for assistance they may seek
 That *Tool of Tyrants, Blust'ring Bruns'ick,*
 Who, doubtless, shortly with his Chasseurs,
 Wou'd come in to increase our pressures.
 Ye know they're swifter on the road,
 Besides, their heels are iron shod ;
 Then we'll be driv'n from town to town.
 And where they find us, ride us down ;
 They'll eat the fodder of each Ass,
 Nor leave one particle of grafs.

HERE

HERE Cuddie bow'd, and then sat down,
 And now a gen'ral hiss went round.
 Some said, he makes a speech at least
 As long as half a Pension List.
 Some said, he seems design'd by Fate,
 To be a Minister of State :
 Some said, he well might grace the Treas'ry,
 To find examples of our misery :
 Some said, he seems a vast profound Ass,
 And some, a lousy, *Hairy, Dun'd-Ass* :
 Some said, to live, he is not fit,
 And some cried hurl him to a PITT.

AT last this clam'rous tumult ceases,
 On hearing ORDER from the Preses,
 Who said, to hear, he would be glad,
 A sober speech. One rose, and said,
 Altho' of war I'm not a liker,
 Yet I agree with the first speaker.

My friends, we have been long degraded,
 Our rights these horses have invaded,
 (They, each day, have their double ration,
 While we do pine in mere *starvation*)
 We ought our rights for to regain,
 And with our lives these rights maintain.

THE world has had its darksome nights,
 Now every one perceives his rights ;

Ev'n

Ev'n Man, who should know better things,
 Have long been dup'd by Priests and Kings—
 Have been led captive at their will,
 For fear of either hemp or hell ;
 Now wish to banish pension'd drones,
 Ev'n Kings now sit on tott'ring thrones.

YE see, my friends, how that the Franks
 Have drawn their heads out of the branks,
 They all distinctions have forbidden,
 Nor will they longer be Priest-ridden ;
 The Pope no more can damn their souls,
 They laugh at him and all his bulls.

YE likewise see, in civil matters,
 They have broke off their iron fetters :
 Tho' they were long in darkness held,
 That darkness now, is near dispell'd,
 A brighter sun dispels their mist,
 (They say their sun rose in the West)
 They now the light of Freedom see,
 And boast of strict equality :
 Now what they have can call their own,
 Nor dread they thunders from a throne.
 None now upon their rights dare trample ;
 Why should not we take their example ?

THE former speaker talks of Bruns'ick,
 But who for him now cares a broom-stick ?

My

My friends, ye plainly see that he's
 An ass that dup'd by refugees.
 If ever he among us come,
 We'll soon find means to send him home ;
 We'll gather round him in vast clusters,
 And laugh at all his threats and blusters ;
 We'll eat up all the hay and corn,
 Or, what we cannot eat we'll burn :
 Then we'll surround him in such swarms,
 That he'll be glad to ground his arms.

As it grows late, and ye seem weary,
 (Except to see how votes may carry)
 I'll say no more at this first meeting,
 But may resume at next night's *sitting*.
 And now, at length, the vote round passes,
 Maintain, or not, the Rights of Asses ;
 To know the issue all were keen,
 The vote was carry'd *nem. con.* Maintain.

Extracted from the Minutes,

Nil nisi verum.

A. DULLASS, N. P.

